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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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BRUCE H. TROXELL
SUITE 1404
5205 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041

EXAMINER

JACKSON, ANDRE L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 11/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/617,380

Applicant(s)

LAU, BOON HWA

Examiner

Andre' L. Jackson

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 6-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-5 and 9-12 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/11/2003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 3677

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 8 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 1 and 8, lines 8 and 9 respectively, change "interconnected" to -- interconnecting --. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USPN 6,378,674 to Lee. Lee (Figs. 1-4 and 11) discloses an expandable pull rod for luggage, the expandable pull rod including single or dual elongate handle unit(s) and a handle grip on a top of the handle unit(s), the handle grip having a push button or switch, the expandable pull rod comprising a sliding tube (201) connected to the handle grip; a support tube (204) fixed at a bottom of the luggage, the sliding tube being slidably disposed in the support tube; locking means (13-15) in a lower portion of the sliding tube; a connecting rod (103) interconnecting the

Art Unit: 3677

push button and the locking means; buffer means (11, 12, 131) within a lower portion of the sliding tube, wherein the handle grip is capable of gradually and dampedly extending from a top of the luggage a predetermined distance by pressing the push button in a pulling operation of the handle assembly (col. 4, lines 58-64).

As to claims 6 and 7, both the support tube and sliding tube provides a plurality of locking apertures (col. 4 lines 58-60).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-5 and 9-12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: None of the prior art references disclose or suggest the combination of structural components or the specific arrangement of these components as set forth in applicant's claims. In particular, the prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a retractable handle assembly for a luggage item, including a buffer means located within a lower portion of a sliding tube, wherein the buffer means includes an upper plunger, a spring anchored in the plunger, a piston rod inserted in the spring, a sealing ring anchored on a top of the piston rod, a lower n-shaped bifurcation urged against a bottom of the spring, and a pin hingedly coupled to a top of the n-shaped bifurcation and a bottom of the piston rod together.

Art Unit: 3677

None of the prior art references whether taken alone or used in combination disclose or suggest the combination of limitations and the specific arrangement of these limitations as recited in the above claims.

Conclusion

Additional references are cited on the PTO 892 form but were not used to determine patentability of this application instead the references gave background information on related retractable/extendable handle devices useable with a suitcase/luggage.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andre' L. Jackson whose telephone number is (703) 605-4276. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. (10 am - 6 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy J. Swann can be reached on (703) 306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ALJ

André L. Jackson
Patent Examiner
AU 3677


ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER